Joint Ministry of Education/Ministry of Advanced Education

Review of the Recommendations of the

Select Standing Committee on Education Report 2002

A Future for Learners: A Vision for Renewal of Education in British Columbia

The Select Standing Committee on Education (SSCE) Report made twenty-seven recommendations. This summary table lists the recommendations and how the Ministries of Education (MEd) and Advanced Education (AVED) have responded to the recommendations.

Recommendation of the Committee	Ministries' Response
Mandate	
1. Create a mandate statement for the entire education system that: a) is modelled after the current mandate for the K-12 system; b) acknowledges the importance of all citizens being able to access both broad-based and career-specific learning opportunities throughout their lives; c) describes the responsibility of each level of authority for three goals of education: i) intellectual development, ii) human/social development, and iii) career development; d) defines the function and priority for each level of the system, and indicates for each level the relative importance of: i) readiness, ii) foundation skills, iii) employability, iv) research and development, and v) life-long learning;	The two ministries support the government's strategic plan, specifically two objectives: "British Columbia will have a skilled workforce" and "British Columbians will be educated." The *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* requires all ministries to develop annual service plans which include mandate statements. The Ministers of Education and Advanced Education have recommended developing a joint statement to reflect the importance of life-long learning as recommended by the Committee. However, the Ministers believe it is important to maintain separate mission statements that reflect the unique characteristics of the two education systems. The Minister of Education is currently reviewing a revised "Statement of Education" which is the mandate statement for the K-12 system. The draft statement incorporates the following SSCE recommendations: intellectual development, human/social development, career development, foundation skills and education, employability, life-long learning, equity and accessibility, flexibility and choice, quality and relevance, and accountability. The revised mandate statement is expected to support and acknowledge the critical linkages with advanced and continuing education. With respect to early childhood education, please see the response to recommendation #2. The Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED), in consultation with post-secondary institutions, has developed the following mission statement. It is reflected in AVED's service plan. "The Ministry of Advanced Education provides leadership and support for a top-notch advanced educational and training system that provides all British Columbians with opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge they need to fully participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the province."

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e) outlines expectations regarding: i) equity and accessibility, ii) flexibility and choice, iii) quality and relevance, and iv) accountability, and f) promotes seamlessness between: i) early childhood education, ii) foundation education, iii) advanced education, iv) continuing education, and v) research and development.	An integrated government approach is essential and inter-ministerial committees, such as the Deputy Ministers' Committees and staff committees on literacy, physical activity, and the labour market play an important role in strategic coordination. • In order to promote better linkages between the two ministries and education systems, MEd and AVED periodically hold joint executive committee meetings to share information, to discuss common issues and strategies to promote seamlessness between the K-12 and post-secondary education systems. • In addition, K-12 and post-secondary institutions and organizations pursue joint initiatives that enhance transition.
2. Consider the merits and feasibility of extending the mandate of public education to include early childhood education.	The Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) has the primary mandate for early childhood education. MCFD is responsible for providing an integrated service model for young children and their families. MEd is actively working with MCFD on common issues, such as early childhood development and data-sharing. AVED also participates in the area of post-secondary education and training for professionals in early childhood education. The K-12 system promotes seamlessness with early childhood education service providers at the local level. Many school boards - such as Central Okanagan, Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique, Peace River North, Langley and Qualicum - are working in partnership with other agencies, volunteer organizations and service providers to identify vulnerable children and maximize early childhood development opportunities. This includes providing child care and preschools in schools in innovative and cost-effective ways. Boards are also working with community partners to offer early literacy programs to children such as: *Books for Babes*, *Books for Breakfast* and *Mother Goose*. While parenting support can be provided, it is important to acknowledge that parents are primarily responsible for providing their children with the healthy and supportive home environment necessary for learning and development.

3. Ensure the primacy of the public interest by clearly indicating in legislation that: a) the mandate statement must be reflected in all documents, reports and plans produced at any level of the education system; b) statutory provisions supersede the provisions of collective agreements or other contractual arrangements; c) institutions have the flexibility to: i) institute best practices, ii) organize and schedule learning opportunities, and iii) assign staff as required for the effective and efficient delivery of education services. d) design, deliver and fund professional development in accordance with their plans for improvement.	3a) The current K-12 mandate statement, *The Statement of Education,* is widely quoted, replicated and referenced throughout the K-12 system. MEd expects that a revised mandate statement would be adopted equally broadly. AVED has developed an accountability framework for the post-secondary education system to meet the requirements of the Act. The Ministry's mission statement is reflected in its service plan and service plan report. 3b) The *School Act,* Section 28, supersedes collective agreement provisions that are inconsistent with it. Recent revisions to the *School Act* override specific provisions in collective agreements and provide school boards with greater freedom to organize and schedule learning opportunities and allows parents to volunteer in their children's schools. The *Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act* removed collective agreement restrictions on class sizes, distributed learning, hours of operation and instructional support for colleges, university colleges and institutes. 3 c) and 3 d) In addition to legislative changes that provide school boards with more flexibility, the K-12 accountability framework encourages school boards to institute best practices, organize and schedule learning opportunities for staff and to design, deliver and fund professional development as outlined in districts' accountability contracts and every school's growth plan. *Please see recommendation #27 for additional information on professional development in the K-12 system.* 3c) All public post-secondary institutions now receive block funding that provides greater autonomy and flexibility in program planning and delivery, recognizing that the public post-secondary institutions are in the best position to make decisions regarding the needs of their students and communities. 3d) As in 3c), professional development is considered to be the responsibility of post-secondary institutions. Professional development is linked to quality and to results-based performance. It is expected that institutions will consider professional development in the context of their annual service plans.

4. Set strategic direction for the Province to ensure that: a) the education system addresses the anticipated employment needs of the Province;	4a) Predicting future employment trends is challenging; however, government is working with partners to obtain information and respond to emerging trends. • To meet anticipated employment needs, the Graduation Program 2004 includes employability skills in the graduation portfolio. Along with required coursework in core knowledge and skills, this will maximize graduates' employability.[1] • Students need to be aware of emerging labour market trends and opportunities. Across many occupations, including the trades sector, an aging workforce means more opportunities, and technological advances means higher educational requirements. Many districts are offering more trades-related training. Through locally developed[2] courses, districts are working with communities and the private sector to develop 'skills requirements' that meet the employment needs of local communities.[3] • AVED is meeting the government's New Era commitments by increasing the number of nursing, social work/child protection and medical student spaces; doubling the number of computer science, electrical and computer engineering graduates; and increasing the number of trainees and apprentices. • AVED has announced an aerospace strategy designed to improve skills training, and, more recently, the establishment of an oil and gas education and training consortium. • The government is also working to ensure there is an adequate supply of skilled labour for the 2010 Olympics in sectors such as construction, and hospitality and tourism. The ministries of Education and Advanced Education are working together to address ways in which the education system can better integrate apprenticeship and career training: • Secondary school apprenticeships allows students to begin their apprenticeship programs in secondary school. • Career Technical Centres permit students to earn dual credit towards high school graduation and post-secondary programs.

[1] Will take effect with the 2007 graduating class.

4. b) residents of British Columbia, who have attained the prerequisite provincial competencies and standards, have access to advanced education; c) learners and parents are informed about the future employment opportunities in the Province;	4b) The government has announced a post-secondary Strategic Investment Plan to the year 2010. Access to education will be improved through expanding the public system by 25,000 new spaces. With the increase in supply of spaces, more applicants will be admitted which should lower the grade point averages students need for entrance to university-level programs. 4c) Planning 10 is a new course required for graduation which gives students the opportunity to learn about labour markets and staying current with labour trends. Planning 10 encourages students to explore a wide range of career and education choices, to think about their prospects for success in those careers, and to plan how to pursue their chosen career paths and post-secondary education. As part of the Planning 10 course, students learn about eight possible focus areas[4] which allow students to consider a broad range of education choices and career options during the graduation program and in the future. Each focus area can lead to a number of post-secondary education or career opportunities. AVED provides information about the labour market, information on career options to help students make career and personal choices, and career planning information including self-assessment, occupational information, labour market trends, education and training and work search. Products include *Work Futures*, *Start Now! Work Futures for Entry Level Jobs*, *High Opportunity Occupations*, and *What's Key in Labour Market Information For B.C.* They are available online, including at Achieve BC, and used by career counsellors.

[2] Locally developed courses i e board-authorized courses. There is no limit to the number of school board/independent school authority authorized courses which may be used as part of the 28 credits of electives needed to fulfill the graduation requirements for the 2004 graduation program, or the 24 credits of selected studies required for the 1995 Program. MEd encourages school boards and independent school authorities to offer locally relevant courses to meet the needs of schools and their communities while providing choice and flexibility for students.

[3] Through Board authorized courses as of Sept 2004

[4] The eight focus areas are: •Business and Applied Business •Fine Arts, Design, and Media •Fitness and Recreation •Health and Human Services •Liberal Arts and Humanities •Science and Applied Sciences •Tourism, Hospitality, and Foods •Trades and Technology.

4. d) unreasonable barriers to learners with special challenges are removed; e) technology is used to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of learning opportunities and support services;	4d) School boards have more flexibility in designing and delivering programs for students with special challenges. B.C.'s K-12 data system supports identification of groups of students who require extra help. Aboriginal communities are working with boards to develop and implement Aboriginal enhancement agreements to support aboriginal students. There is more flexibility and support with changes to the funding formula. For example, special needs students taking distance education courses are now funded fully equivalent to a special needs student in the classroom.[5] AVED sets annual targets to ensure continued access for learners in need of adult basic education, English as a second language (ESL) and adult special education. Adult basic education is offered tuition-free to those learners who do not have a secondary graduation diploma. ESL courses help immigrants and refugees overcome language barriers to meet their employment, education and social participation goals. Adult special education programs assist students with disabilities to access post-secondary education. In 2004/05, the budget for AVED's Adult Literacy Cost-shared Program, which funds community-based literacy programming, was doubled to $1.4 million. 4e) School districts are using technology to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of learning opportunities and support services. Examples around the province include the Wireless Writing project in Peace River North, to the increasing use of the web to communicate with parents and the public, such as Burnaby and Kamloops school districts' web casting for student learning. In October 2003, in response to the Rural Achievement Taskforce recommendations, MEd funded three districts (Alberni, Coast Mountains, and Prince George) to pilot e-learning in order to provide more opportunities and options for students and increase course availability in rural communities.

[5] Funding for special needs provincial resource programs has increased in the areas of SETBC and autism support. A new program supporting cochlear implants has been established.

4. f) specific institutions are designated to engage in research and development into issues of societal importance; and	As well, MEd has taken a critical leadership role: • To enhance the use of technology to support learning, in 2002 MEd removed the cap limiting the number of students in electronic learning programs and allowed all boards to offer electronic learning programs. MEd also now funds these students at the same level as students in a regular classroom. As a result of these changes the number of students participating in online learning has more than tripled in the past three years. • MEd is administering provincial exams to students with special needs via a secure Internet connection. • A strategic plan for e-learning in B.C. was created with stakeholder groups to ensure that students expand their access to innovative e-learning. *Please see recommendation #21.* BCcampus was announced in 2002 to provide B.C. learners with a web-based access point to all online learning programs and services offered by B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions. Student spaces for online learning will expand from 260 in 2001/02 to 1,310 by 2006/07. • BCcampus also provides for system-wide development of online courses and programs. It enables institutions to work together developing courses. 4f) In September 2003, MEd provided start up funding for a new School Leadership Centre, at the University of British Columbia. The centre includes: • A focus on research and communication about research. • $180,000 for a new school improvement program. Sixty schools will receive improvement awards as part of this program. • Establishing a web-based parent centre that will provide information and access for parents across B.C. to become more involved in their children's schools. • A new teacher corps program to provide annually exchanges for four teachers to study successful international practices.

4. g) research in education is both conducted and assembled, and the findings of research are communicated widely throughout the system.	Government strongly supports research at public post-secondary institutions. The B.C. Knowledge Development Fund (BCKDF) supports research infrastructure, providing 40 per cent of a project's cost, typically matching federal funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation. BCKDF has generated a total investment of over $670 million in research infrastructure in B.C. The Leading Edge Endowment Fund will establish 20 leadership chairs and six regional innovation chairs. The provincial government is also promoting a Life Sciences strategy with the federal government. All B.C. universities have research mandates and some university colleges, colleges and institutes also engage in research activities. Examples of areas of research include biotechnology, forestry, marine biology, fuel cells and alternative energy sources. Post-secondary institutions with formal research mandates report on research activities annually which are reflected in AVED's service plan report. In addition, government has established a program called Knowledge Links to facilitate links between government and the academic research community. Seminars, lectures and a web site profiling research activities are some of the initiatives that will be pursued. 4g) Research in K-12 education, focused on improving student achievement, is conducted, assembled, communicated widely - and most critically - applied in a multitude of ways. Methods to share research are both formal and informal, ranging from presentations by expert educators to district in-service training to research available by email subscription. MEd strongly emphasizes continuing professional development and education leadership in K-12. The Ministry is working with educators at all levels in continuous professional and personal development focused on improving student achievement. The Ministry also has research agreements with post-secondary institutes. Specific examples within K-12 include: • Based on national and international research on effective schools, the district review process examines the ten areas of inquiry. Also, during the district review process, districts' promising practices are identified and widely shared (more details can be found at: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/review/promising/)

4. g) Continued	• A partner group, The Network of Performance-Based Schools, is using an innovative and effective networked approach to work with over a 100 schools in 31 districts to improve student performance. School teams of teachers and principals work together to share information, learn from each other and improve student achievement. More details can be found at: http://www.npbs.ca/ • MEd sponsored a B.C. Innovations Conference for K-12 educators in March 2004 to share applied research, including B.C. best practices, and to learn from international leaders in educational research about emerging trends and developments. • The Early Success symposium in May 2004 showcased the latest research in teaching and learning related to reading, writing, and oral language. • MEd staff regularly present their research findings at conferences and in academic papers. The Ministry's Information Department plays a critical role in disseminating information to schools and districts.
5. Review, revise and consolidate the existing statutes governing public education.	Both ministries will meet their three-year deregulation targets. • AVED's legislation governing public post-secondary institutions has been revised and institutions have been given more autonomy and flexibility as a result. For example, the process and the time required to create university college, college and institute board bylaws has been streamlined by eliminating government's role in reviewing and approving them. • Some statutes have been consolidated, for example, the *Institute of Technology Act* was repealed, eliminating unnecessary duplication with the *College and Institute Act*. As well, to meet K-12 partners' needs: • K-12 legislation is consolidated in the Manual of School Law, which is available on the Internet and in print. • Legislative and policy updates are communicated to partners in various ways, including email and web updates.

Recommendation of the Committee	Ministries' Response
Governance and Management	
6. Designate specific institutions as "provincial institutions" and authorize them to offer specialized advanced education opportunities and to be centres of research excellence.	The government recently announced new mandates for three institutions as part of the post-secondary Strategic Investment Plan: • The University College of the Cariboo will be established as a special purpose teaching university with a mandate to ladder college programs to undergraduate degrees, and to maintain a focus on open and distance education by assuming responsibility for the British Columbia Open University/Open College; and • A new University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus will be established to offer university programming and courses, and provide research facilities. Its focus will be to provide university level programming for students in the Okanagan region. A larger more focused Okanagan College will expand university transfer, trades and other applied training options. Provincial mandates are maintained for other institutions: • The public universities (University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, University of Northern British Columbia and Royal Roads University) have provincial mandates. Royal Roads University is a specialized university focusing on applied and professional education, while the other universities offer a wider range of programming. • The British Columbia Institute of Technology, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, and the Justice Institute of British Columbia offer specialized education and training for the province. • Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and the Institute of Indigenous Government have provincial mandates in relation to Aboriginal education. All universities have research mandates and some university colleges, colleges and institutes also engage in research activities. Examples of areas of research include biotechnology, forestry, marine biology, fuel cells and alternative energy sources. Post-secondary institutions that have a formal research mandate report on their research activities annually through AVED's service plan report.

6. *Continued*	Government has applied a consortia model to address strategic economic priorities. Partnerships between government, industry and post-secondary institutions have been announced for aerospace, and oil and gas, and other sectors are also being considered. Through these consortia, some post-secondary institutions are taking on leadership roles in promoting coordination and innovation across the system.
7. Enhance the performance by: a) differentiating clearly between governance and management responsibilities; and b) providing orientation and ongoing training to members of governing bodies and senior managers.	7a) The governance responsibilities and management responsibilities within K-12 have been clearly delineated in legislation, MEd's service plan and districts' accountability contracts. • MEd has the responsibility to set educational standards based on the outcomes students need to achieve, to monitor student performance and report the results to the public, to support districts in improving student and school performance, to allocate funds for the education system, and to oversee the governance of the system as a whole. • School boards have a primary management responsibility for student learning. To support effective management, school boards have been granted increased autonomy, flexibility and management responsibilities as per Bill 28 the *Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act* 2002 and Bill 34[6] the *School Amendment Act 2002*. Governance authority and responsibilities for public post-secondary institutions are set out under legislation. Academic issues are dealt with by each institution's senate, academic council or education council, while management and overall financial responsibility rests with each institution's board. Further, AVED provides annual budget and accountability letters that reinforce these roles and responsibilities. 7b) This recommendation is consistent with a number of training initiatives undertaken with K-12 partner groups. With the British Columbia Principals and Vice Principals Association (BCPVPA) and the British Columbia School Superintendents Association (BCSSA), MEd jointly funds leadership academies on instructional leadership. As well, the Deputy Minister of MEd and other executive members meet three times yearly with superintendents on instructional leadership to support student achievement.

[6] Bill 34 recognizes the importance of parental involvement, provides students and parents with more choice, provides school boards with more financial flexibility and established the basis for the new accountability framework.

7. *b) Continued*	In partnership with the BCSSA and BCPVPA, MEd funds the Teacher Support Project to improve the capacity of school administrators to support and coach teachers. Post-secondary education institutions are responsible for providing orientation and ongoing training for their board members and senior administrators.
8. Require all authorities and institutions to involve community members and parents or learners, as appropriate, in creating and monitoring their service plans and in formulating their annual performance reports.	Parental involvement in K-12 is now legislatively supported. Within the K-12 accountability framework, school boards must consult with school planning councils on resource and staff allocation, the district accountability contract and programs in the schools. School planning councils (SPC) create school growth plans and the majority of SPC members are parents or parents and a student along with the school principal and a teacher.[7] District Parental Advisory Committees (DPACs) and Parental Advisory Committees (PACs) also play a key role in providing feedback to schools and school boards. In 2002, DPACs were legislatively recognized and their role, composition and responsibilities defined. Public post-secondary institutions serve their local communities by undertaking extensive local consultation in developing their strategic plans and programming choices. • All public post-secondary institutions are required to submit annual service plans and reports to AVED. These service plans describe the activities institutions will be undertaking and targets they will achieve. Institutional service plans are available to the public. • Public post-secondary institution boards, senates and education councils include student representatives. Board members are representative of the local community and board meetings are generally open to the public. • Most public post-secondary institutions have established Aboriginal advisory councils which include aboriginal members from local communities.

[7] The school planning council consists of: the school principal, one teacher representative from the teaching staff, elected by secret ballot; three representatives from the school's parent advisory council, all elected by secret ballot, one of whom is an elected officer of the parent advisory council; and one student from Grade 10, 11 or 12, where applicable, appointed annually by the school principal after consultation with the students enrolled in those grades at the school.

8. *Continued*	• AVED has undertaken discussions with stakeholders as part of the process of developing new policies and programs. For example, a series of apprenticeship forums were held to help develop the new industry training model, and the Minister of Advanced Education held six student forums to discuss issues with students. • The Minister of Advanced Education has recently established a Minister's Advisory Council on Post-Secondary Education that includes membership from the broader community.
9. Require that service plans and annual performance reports are made available to interested persons and groups.	All ministry service plans and annual service plans reports are available to interested persons and groups, either through the ministries' websites or on request. In addition: • The *School Amendment Act 2002* requires all school boards to make their accountability contracts and school plans available to the public. Many districts post their accountability contracts, which include progress information, on their websites. Other school and district performance data are easily available on the Achieve BC and MEd websites including school and district profiles with Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) results, satisfaction surveys, and exam results. • District review reports are also publicly available on the MEd website and are well publicized. Many boards also provide direct links to their district review reports on district websites. • The annual budget and accountability letters sent to each public post-secondary institution are available on AVED's web site. • All public post-secondary institutions are required to submit annual service plans and reports to AVED. These service plans describe the activities institutions will be undertaking and targets they will achieve. The institutional service plans are available to the public.
10. Permit education authorities and institutions to include in their service plans requests for time-specific waivers from provincial constraints they believe are impairing their performance.	For K-12 this would require substantial legislative changes and may involve other organizations. It would also be consistent with charter schools. The province has no plans to implement charter schools.

11. Continue to develop a system for funding education that: a) is simple, equitable, predictable and transparent; b) ensures that appropriate funding flows to the service providers selected by each learner; c) minimizes the impact of economic circumstance on each learner's access and prospects for success;	11a) The new K-12 funding allocation system is simple, transparent, and results in more predictable funding to school boards over a three-year time period. The formula was simplified to reduce the number of targeted funding categories and the focus shifted to funding students. Block funding has been introduced for all public post-secondary institutions. Block funding gives institutions the flexibility to manage their resources and provide programming that reflects local priorities and needs. 11b) K-12 students can now move more easily between districts and funding follows the student, which encourages responsiveness from service providers, including more choice. MEd, working with education partners, is open to considering more flexible funding arrangements to support more choice for students. AVED provides three-year funding targets to public post-secondary institutions which are communicated through the budget and accountability letters. The three-year time horizon enhances institutions' ability to plan financially and programmatically. Government's post-secondary Strategic Investment Plan is a longer term, six-year, plan which sets out targets for new student spaces for public post-secondary institutions. 11c) K-12 funding in B.C. minimizes economic circumstances. Provincially, the funding formula allocates the same per pupil amount while recognizing the impacts of remoteness, climate, student needs and other factors. School boards also have the flexibility to allocate resources to schools and students with greater needs. MEd is examining how to increase the transparency of how school boards allocate resources in their districts.[8] The funding of Community Link and some Aboriginal programs mitigate economic circumstance by providing additional supports for vulnerable students. MEd also funds full-day kindergarten programming for children who are Aboriginal, some students who have special needs and ESL students.

[8] By introducing "notional funding" also known as "school resource allocation" i.e. funding by school.

11. d) considers the principle that, as learners proceed to higher certification, they should contribute an increasing share of the actual costs of advanced education and the anticipated value of the particular education to the learner; and e) facilitates monitoring the effectiveness and prudence of resource utilization.	B.C. provides financial aid to post-secondary students, based on financial need, as one way to reduce barriers to education. The B.C. Student Assistance Program is a comprehensive program which includes the Canada Student Loans Program, Canada Study Grants for Students with dependents, Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation Bursaries, and B.C. Student Loans. 11d) One of the five strategic shifts AVED identified during its Core Review was to ensure better alignment between the costs and benefits of post-secondary education. Consultations regarding the tuition fee freeze were undertaken in 2001, and in 2002, autonomy for setting tuition fees was returned to public post-secondary institutions. Also, since 2002, apprentices have shared the costs of their post-secondary training by paying tuition for their technical (classroom-based) training. One of the consequences of giving institutions the autonomy to set their tuition fess is that they have been able to allocate some of the additional revenue to student financial aid. 11e) The K-12 accountability framework, through the district accountability contracts and the district review process, facilitates monitoring the effectiveness and prudence of resource utilization in support of student achievement. Prudent expenditure of tax dollars is also managed through boards' legal requirement to submit balanced budgets and Ministry audits. The adoption of "notional funding" would also support this recommendation. AVED uses the public post-secondary accountability framework as a tool to monitor system efficiency and effectiveness.
12. Enhance accountability throughout the system by implementing: a) a framework to ensure that authorities, institutions, and individuals at all levels, are accountable for performance, and are expected to continuously improve and adapt to changing needs and circumstances;	12a) In accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, both ministries have developed accountability frameworks. The K-12 accountability framework successfully focuses school boards and schools on improving student achievement. The framework includes: school growth plans developed by school planning councils, district accountability contracts, the deputy minister's visits to districts, district reviews, and aboriginal enhancement agreements. It formalizes school boards' responsibility to continuously improve student achievement. The accountability contracts and school growth plans are adaptable to local district characteristics, changing needs and circumstances - while meeting provincial standards.

12. b) an information system which collects and reports outcomes data on growth in learner achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, and compliance with relevant legislative and policy frameworks, as well as information on emerging trends and needs;	AVED has developed an accountability framework for public post-secondary education institutions that lays out expectations for all partners. The framework includes the Ministry's service plan and report, budget and accountability letters sent from the Ministry to all institutions (available on the Ministry's web site) and a requirement for all institutions to develop annual service plans and reports. The Industry Training Authority (ITA), which funds training for trades and occupations, has an accountability framework and service plan agreement with AVED that establishes clear targets and performance measures. The ITA funds training delivered through public and private trainers. 12b) MEd's unique data collection and reporting system provides valuable information to develop school growth plans, district accountability contracts, inform district review teams and other initiatives to support student achievement. Students' performance can be tracked individually[9] and by demographics,[10] at the school, district and provincial levels. Information includes FSA in grades 4 and 7, transition rates, graduation rates, school and district profiles. MEd also provides provincial exam results at the school, district and provincial levels in grades 10, 11 and 12.[11] (For more information, see: http://www.achievebc.ca/spt/school_profile.html and http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reportfinder/) Teachers extensively use classroom data, including report cards and the well-regarded performance standards. Edudata, a UBC affiliate, provides free analysis of FSA results at the school and district level and is publicly available. Working with districts, MEd conducts parent, staff and student satisfaction surveys.[12] Having this extensive information enables schools and districts to monitor achievement results and provide effective support to learners.

[9] Through the PEN (Personal Education Number).
[10] Boys, girls, age, grade, aboriginal students, students with special needs, French immersion students, ESL students.
[11] Results for Grade 10 and 11 exams will begin in 2004/2005 school year.
[12] Survey participants are asked about their overall satisfaction with: academic performance, computer use, participation in physical activities, safety at school, getting along with others, and preparation for the world beyond school.

12. c) a periodic, comprehensive system for external auditing learner achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, compliance, and development in all publicly-funded institutions; and	The new electronic student information system (being developed by school boards in conjunction with MEd) will manage student enrolment, records and outcomes information more efficiently and effectively, significantly reducing the administrative burden on schools. This will allow more resources to be directed to improving student achievement and support improved tracking of achievement and choices made by students. A Data Warehouse has been developed by AVED, and colleges, university colleges and institutes to collect data on system performance indicators. It collects data on a wide range of topics and is the basis for many of the performance measures in the Ministry's service plan. The University Presidents' Council of British Columbia provides a similar data collection service for B.C.'s universities. AVED undertakes surveys that report on learner satisfaction and achievement. Examples include the University Baccalaureate Graduate Surveys and the College and Institute Student Outcomes Surveys. 12c) The K-12 accountability framework and the auditing process meets this recommendation: • During district reviews, an external teams of educators, parents and Ministry staff visit and review up to 20 districts annually. The focus of the district review is to: examine district and school plans, meet with district staff and school planning councils, review the district's student achievement results using provincial, district and classroom data, share the district's promising practices on a provincial basis, and provide recommendations for improving achievement in the district. • Stakeholder satisfaction is measured annually through the satisfaction surveys and is a key component of districts' accountability contracts. • The Ministry audits for funding compliance (see: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/accountability/district/) The accountability framework supports the development of publicly funded districts and schools through its consistent focus on student achievement. As mentioned above, AVED undertakes surveys that report on learner satisfaction and achievement.

12. d) procedures for progressively greater external intervention into the governance and management of authorities and institutions who consistently demonstrate less than adequate performance.	12d) In K-12, procedures for progressively greater external intervention exist through: • The district review process; • Districts must provide detailed responses to district review team recommendations[13]; • MEd has the legal authority to require reports, including fiscal reports, from school boards; • The appointment of a special advisor, to review and report on board matters; • The appointment of an official trustee to conduct the affairs of the school board. In 2002, the grounds to appoint an official trustee were expanded from strictly fiscal considerations. Now an official trustee may be appointed where there is a risk to student achievement, if this would be in the public interest. Legislation allows for government to request information from public post-secondary institutions, and in the case of colleges, university colleges and institutes, to issue directives to replace government appointed board members, and to appoint a public administrator.
13. Identify a fair process that will establish the terms of employment for all staff employed in the education system without disruption of learning opportunities.	The provincial government has appointed Don Wright to review the process for teacher bargaining in K-12 and to make recommendations for improvement. His report is expected in the fall of 2004. Each public post-secondary institutions is responsible for establishing the terms and conditions of employment for its staff.
14. Institute an appeals process that will expeditiously settle any student or parental concerns not resolved by administrators and governance bodies at the institutional level.	School districts are governed by elected boards of trustees who must be responsive and accountable both to the public who elects them and to meet required provincial standards. All school districts and post-secondary institutions must comply with the principles of administrative justice or be subject to judicial review. Under Section 11 of the *School Act*, parents of students enrolled in public schools can appeal the decision, or failure to make a decision, of an employee of a school board, in matters that affect the education, health and safety of a student. Section 11 of the

[13] District-specific support may also be provided

14. Continued	*School Act* also requires school boards to have appeal procedures in place. Parents can also seek redress from the courts or the Ombudsman. There are other checks and balances in K-12: • The BC Confederation of Parental Advisory Councils has developed the Advocacy Project to help parents and students be heard and resolve problems in a constructive way i.e., a dispute resolution process. • Under recent changes to the *Teaching Profession Act*, the B.C. College of Teachers may now receive written complaints by the public about the conduct of a member. Instituting an additional external appeals process in K-12 may impose greater regulatory burden, substantive costs and may not support the greater autonomy and accountability which school boards have been granted. Each public post-secondary institution is responsible for its own appeals processes and policies.
15. Consider the most effective and efficient provision of administrative functions such as accounting, payroll, human resources, facilities maintenance, capital construction, and transportation.	*The School Amendment Act 2002* allows school boards to enter into agreements to purchase or provide managerial, administrative or other services. Boards are able to contract with another corporate entity to provide shared administrative services. In K-12, the B.C. Public Schools Employers' Association (BCPSEA) is a full-service employers' association and the accredited bargaining agent for school boards. BCPSEA's responsibilities include: providing labour relations advice and services, including contract interpretation and grievance/ arbitration case management; promoting effective human resources practices, and coordinating compensation and benefits for excluded staff. The following district functions have changed to be more effective and efficient: • Accounting, payroll, and human resources funding is included in per pupil funding and any administrative savings can now be retained by the school district. • Transportation costs were previously funded at historical cost level providing little incentive for efficiencies. Transportation funding is under review; in the interim, transportation funding by district is maintained at current levels and schools can retain efficiencies.

15. Continued	• By MEd policy, school boards can now keep a minimum of 25 per cent of proceeds from the disposal of surplus assets. Previously, there was little incentive to dispose of surplus assets. • Capital requests are priorized on the basis of capacity utilization considerations. Renovation requests are priorized using the facility audit program. Facilities maintenance is now funded more on a per student basis rather than on square "footage" which provides incentive for better use and maintenance of facilities.[14] The electronic student information system will reduce the administrative burden on schools by creating an integrated network to manage student enrolment and the movement of student records. *For more information on the electronic student information system please see recommendation 12b.* Each public post-secondary institutions is responsible for the management of its own resources and decides how best to provide its administrative services.

[14] Location factors are also recognized such as regional cost differences, student enrollment and remoteness.

Recommendation of the Committee	Ministries' Response
Service Delivery	
16. Establish a standing committee of educators and non-educators to identify and continuously review the competencies and standards that must be met to qualify for each certificate, diploma or degree.	A standing committee of educators and non-educators - the Education Advisory Council - constituted under section 171 of the *School Act*, provides advice to the minister on K-12 policy matters respecting education, including competencies and standards required to qualify for a British Columbia Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma) or a School Completion Certificate. The criteria for earning a Dogwood Diploma are clearly articulated, and are reviewed on an on-going basis. In 2002, the Ministry of Education undertook a thorough review of the graduation program. Through extensive consultations with parents, students, educators and the public, the competencies and standards for the graduation program 2004 were established. The graduation program was updated to reflect emerging labour market requirements. The Council of the B.C. College of Teachers, composed of educators and non-educators, sets standards for public school teacher certificates and member competence. For independent school teachers, the Independent School Teacher Certification Committee implements provincial standards. The Minister of Advanced Education has established a Minister's Advisory Council on Post-Secondary Education which will provide broad advice on post-secondary matters. The Degree Quality Assessment Board has been established to review and make recommendations on applications for new degree programs submitted by post-secondary institutions (public, private and out-of-province) and use of the word "university" submitted by private and out-of-province public post-secondary institutions. The Board conducts quality assessment processes to ensure that proposed new degree programs meet consistent, rigorous criteria to ensure high quality degree programs. Board members include educators and non-educators. The new industry training system is a competency-based model. The Industry Training Authority (ITA), working with industry, is responsible for ensuring that program standards for trades and occupations meet the needs of industry and the workplace. The ITA will be using employer and learner feedback surveys to improve program delivery.

17. Organize the provincial competencies and standards for certificates, diplomas and degrees so that learners are able to pursue a career path in stages, to accelerate, to transfer laterally, to receive partial credits, and where desirable, to obtain interim certification if a significant portion of the provincial competencies and standards has been attained.	In K-12, the requirements for earning a Dogwood Diploma are the same across the province. As long as provincial standards are met, there is flexibility in how they are met. Students can obtain credit in various ways, such as: completing courses at a neighbourhood school; challenging a course; seeking equivalency for a course from outside B.C.; the recognition of external credentials earned outside of the school system; dual credit for post-secondary courses, independent-directed study and/ or electronic distance education. Career Technical Centres and similar programs allow students to complete secondary school while simultaneously earning credit for post-secondary education. Students can also be awarded a school completion certificate, if they have successfully met standards set by school boards, instead of completing the Dogwood requirements.[15] The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer facilitates articulation and transfer arrangements among B.C.'s post-secondary institutions. B.C.'s credit transfer system is considered one of the best in Canada. The Council encourages post-secondary institutions to develop policies that enhance transferability of post-secondary credit courses so that credit can be applied toward programs at other institutions. Credit transfer provides flexibility to students pursuing post-secondary education. Student satisfaction with credit transfer is a performance measure in AVED's annual service plan report. The new industry training model is a competency-based, modularized approach to industry apprenticeship training. It will develop new and flexible pathways to competency-based credentials, such as modular training, which offers trainees the choice of becoming certified in different components of a trade while retaining options to pursue longer-term training and broader credentials. Competency-based skills assessment will allow more flexible skill development and assessment, and provide options to get credit for existing skill sets and to ladder or bridge into new careers. The model retains the national Red Seal Certification program.

[15] This doesn't preclude students from subsequently completing requirements for the Dogwood

18. Permit individual institutions to award education certificates, diplomas and degrees in accordance with the provincial competencies and standards, but also designate a provincial agency to award certificates, diplomas and degrees to learners who demonstrate attainment of the provincial competencies and standards without regard for how, where, or when they have gained them.	In K-12, the requirements for earning a Dogwood Diploma are the same across the province. As long as provincial standards are met, there is flexibility in how they are met. Students can obtain credit in various ways. Once requirements are met, the Ministry prepares and distributes a Dogwood Diploma to the school or district office for authorized signature and distribution to the student. In addition, school boards or independent school authorities may issue school completion certificates. These are issued to students who are not working towards graduation but have met other standards, set by the board/authority, and have achieved their individual education goals. As noted earlier, the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer facilitates articulation and transfer arrangements among B.C.'s post-secondary institutions. The Council encourages post-secondary institutions to develop policies that enhance transferability of post-secondary credit courses so that credit can be applied toward programs at other institutions. The International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) evaluates the credentials of people who have studied in other provinces or countries and determines comparable levels in British Columbia and Canadian terms. ICES does not award credentials. ICES is managed by the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). The Credit Review Service is a unique national program designed to recognize learning and award academic credit for workplace-based training programs. The Credit Review Service is the first of its kind in Canada and is also managed by BCIT. The new Industry Training Authority permits individuals to demonstrate their existing competencies. Placement exams allow individuals with some trades experience to start their apprenticeship at more advanced levels, while challenge exams allow individuals with extensive experience to receive their B.C. trade credentials.

19. Thoroughly review the legislation and the structures pertaining to apprenticeship training, to ensure the system meets the needs of British Columbians.	Government undertook a review of the industry training and apprenticeship system during 2003. After an evaluation, an adjustment to industry training was considered warranted. The *Industry Train*ing Act established a new industry training model, and in January 2004, the Industry Training Authority (ITA) began operations. The ITA is governed by a nine-member industry board and has a mandate to increase the quality and quantity of industry training and apprenticeship in the province. The new industry training model is a competency-based, modularized approach to apprenticesh*ip* training. The new model will permit the development of new and flexible pathways to compete*ncy*-based credentials, such as modular training, which offers trainees the choice of becoming certi*fied* in different components of a trade, and building on existing skills. The model retains the national Red Seal Certification program. The ministries are working together to make apprenticeship and career training more seamless *and* improve the transition from school to work: • Secondary school apprenticeship (SSA) allows students to begin their apprenticeship progr*ams* in high school. The Deputy Ministers of MEd and AVED recently met with industry represe*ntatives* to encourage them to hire more Secondary school apprentices. This marks the beginning o*f* a new government initiative to further increase the number of students participating in SSA. • Career Technical Centres permit students to earn dual credit towards high school graduatio*n* and post-secondary programs. • Industry training courses allow students to pursue apprenticeship training. Specialized ca*reer* preparation and cooperative education programs have been developed by many districts to *address* a wide range of student interests and skills. These programs include career exploration co*urses* and extended work experience courses. MEd is working with school districts, industry and the ITA to help increase participation in SS*A and* other kinds of industry training for secondary students. MEd and the ITA have begun discussi*ons* about collaboratively reviewing all K-12 industry training in the next two years.

20. Empower authorities and institutions to design and offer learning opportunities that will enable learners to meet the provincial competencies and standards.	Within the K-12 system, school boards and independent school authorities can offer a range of courses so that students can meet provincial graduation standards. The graduation program 2004 provides students with choices to tailor their learning through elective courses. They may earn elective credits towards graduation by completing ministry-authorized courses, board/authority-authorized courses (locally-developed courses that meet Ministry standards), or courses from external sources (such as Woodlinks, Industrial First Aid and Microsoft Computer Certification). For required graduation courses, there are a number to choose from in: language arts, social studies, science, math, applied skills, and/or fine arts courses. Boards have the flexibility to offer tailored learning opportunities. For example, the new "Advancement via Individual Determination Program" (AVID) is a joint research program between the province and the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Chilliwack School District was the first to offer AVID, and it will be expanded to 20 other B.C. schools this year. AVID helps students, who may not otherwise have the grades or study skills, to be accepted into college or university. AVID offers students advanced-level classes and a specific elective that focuses on writing, organization and study skills. Public post-secondary institutions design and offer courses and programs that respond to the needs and priorities of their students and communities. Under recent changes, public colleges may now offer applied baccalaureate degrees, and university colleges, BCIT and the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design may offer applied masters degrees in addition to undergraduate degrees. All public post-secondary institutions offer a wide range of certificate and diploma programs. Government has improved flexibility in the post-secondary system through expanding the role of private institutions and trainers. The Private Post-Secondary Education Commission has been replaced with an industry led Private Career Training Institutions Agency. The Degree Quality Assessment Board has been established to review and make recommendations on applications for new degree programs and use of the word "university" submitted by private post-secondary institutions to ensure that private institutions offer the same high quality degrees that B.C.'s public institutions are known for.

20. Continued	The Industry Training Authority (ITA), working with industry, is responsible for ensuring that program standards for trades and occupations meet the needs of industry and the workplace. The ITA will be using employer and learner feedback surveys to improve program delivery. The new industry training model is a competency-based, modularized approach to apprenticeship training. It will develop new and flexible pathways to competency-based credentials, such as modular training, which offers trainees the choice of becoming certified in different components of a trade while retaining options to pursue longer-term training and broader credentials. Competency-based skills assessment will allow more flexible skill development and assessment, and provide options to get credit for existing skill sets and to ladder or bridge into new careers. The model retains the national Red Seal Certification program.
21. Designate one department or agency to develop a provincial infrastructure for on-line learning, and ensure that all institutions have easy access to this infrastructure so that they can support learners who opt to use an on-line approach for all or part of their education.	In K-12, the most developed infrastructure is PLNet, managed by MEd's information department. The province has committed to upgrading connectivity required for online delivery. Two major upgrade initiatives (PLN4 May 2004 and PLN5 March 2005) will ensure that all K-12 sites meet the minimum standard connectivity (500 kbps) required to support most online programs. PLNet also connects post-secondary institutions to the Internet. The first province-wide application to run on PLNet will be the new electronic student information system. When in place, the system will allow additions such as electronic assessments and examinations. To help school districts, schools and students use online courses, MEd provided seed funding and is supporting an online consortium, BCED Online. BCED Online is a voluntary umbrella organization. Its purpose is to build strong and mutually beneficial partnerships on e-learning, between school districts and their district administrators, teachers and their specialist organizations, independent schools, post-secondary institutions, government and the private sector.

21. Continued	BCcampus was announced in 2002 as a single resource for accessing all of B.C.'s public post-secondary online courses. It allows institutions to partner in post-secondary online courses and programs, and allows students (both secondary and post-secondary) to access online courses from any of the partnering institutions. The ability to access courses from several institutions increases the choices for students and provides students with more options for credentialing pathways. • The number of students enrolled in online learning is a performance measure in the annual AVED's service plan report. • BCcampus also provides for collaborative, system-wide development of new online courses and programs.
22. Once learners complete the core curriculum, they are entitled to choose from a series of substantive pathways leading to certificates, diplomas or degrees and to attend any institution offering pathways.	School boards and independent school authorities must offer students access to required courses in order to meet graduation requirements. One of these requirements is the new Planning 10 course, which introduces students to a range of career and education/training options. Planning 10 encourages students to explore a full range of career and education choices; to think about their prospects for success in those careers; and to plan the actions required to pursue their chosen career paths and post-secondary education destinations. As part of the Planning 10 course, students learn about eight possible focus areas. The goal of the focus areas is to have students consider a broad range of education choices and career options during the graduation program. Each focus area can lead to a number of post-secondary education or career opportunities. *For additional details please see recommendation 4b).* More than half the courses within the graduation program 2004, allow students to make choices and explore a career path. As noted earlier, BCcampus was announced in 2002 as a single resource for accessing all of B.C.'s public post-secondary online courses. It allows institutions to partner in post-secondary online courses and programs, and for students to access online courses from any of the partnering institutions. The ability to access courses from several institutions increases the choices for students and provides students with more options for credentialing pathways. The ability to access courses from several institutions increases the choices for students and provides students with more options for credentialing pathways.

22. Continued	B.C. Open University/Open College (BCOU/OC) offers online courses and programs leading to adult secondary school completion, college certificates and diplomas, and university baccalaureate degrees. As part of the post-secondary Strategic Investment Plan, the University College of the Cariboo will become a special-purpose teaching university and will assume responsibility for BCOU/OC functions The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfers facilitates articulation and transfer arrangements among B.C.'s post-secondary institutions. The Council encourages post-secondary institutions to develop policies that enhance transferability of post-secondary credit courses so that credit can be applied toward programs at other institutions. The new industry training model will permit the development of new and flexible pathways to competency-based credentials, such as modular training, which offers trainees the choice of becoming certified in different components of a trade while retaining options to pursue longer-term training and broader credentials. Competency-based skills assessment will allow more flexible skill development and assessment, and provide options to get credit for existing skills and to bridge into new careers.
23. Establish a College of Educators responsible for certification, standards of practice, ethics, enforcement, and professional development.	Recent changes have been made to the B.C. College of Teachers to provide more accountability and greater public representation while ensuring a teacher majority on the governing council. The B.C. College of Teachers recently released draft "Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in BC" to meet legislated responsibilities.
24. Ensure that the College of Educators serves the public interest by appointing sufficient community members to its governing body.	To serve the public interest, changes to the *Teaching Profession Act* ensure public representation on the governing council of the B.C. College of Teachers. The council is composed of elected educators (the majority), appointed educators and appointed non-educators. The Minister must also now consult with parents before making appointments to the council.
25. Consider that membership in the College of Educators be the only compulsory membership for professional educators employed at all levels of the system, including those in management positions.	All public school teachers must be members of the B.C. College of Teachers. Many independent and band schools also require membership in the B.C. College of Teachers as a condition of employment. Membership in the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) is voluntary; however, school boards have entered into collective agreements which require BCTF membership as a condition of employment.

26. Require authorities and institutions to assess their effectiveness and efficiency by gathering outcomes data about learner achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, and compliance with the relevant legislative and policy frameworks; and to recognize individuals and groups who foster outstanding levels of learner achievement and stakeholder satisfaction, or who contribute significantly to research about the use of best practice.	MEd, school boards and schools collect extensive performance data about student achievement to gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of districts and schools in improving student achievement. Outcomes data is used to develop school growth plans and accountability contracts to improve student achievement. Data includes FSA in grades 4 and 7, transition rates, graduation rates, grade 10, 11 and 12 provincial exam rates, satisfaction survey information, school and district profiles. As well, teachers extensively use classroom data. (*See recommendation #12*). Compliance with relevant legislative and policy frameworks is determined though the accountability framework, the funding formula[16] and auditing. MEd is developing an electronic student information system which will provide school planning councils, principals, school boards and educational leaders with the tools to capture student performance information, report on student results, and make appropriate decisions. A Data Warehouse has been developed by AVED, and colleges, university colleges and institutes to collect data on system performance indicators. It collects data on a wide range of topics and is the basis for many of the performance measures in AVED's service plan. The University Presidents' Council of British Columbia collects similar data for B.C.'s universities. AVED undertakes surveys that report on learner satisfaction and achievement. Examples include the University Baccalaureate Graduate Surveys and the College and Institute Student Outcomes Surveys. Recognition of outstanding B.C. educators and their contributions is important. To support this objective, in September 2003, the Premier announced $100,000 for a new fellowship award recognizing excellence in K-12 teaching. Most public post-secondary institutions also recognize teaching excellence through annual awards. These awards are typically based on nominations made by faculty and students.

[16] For example, MEd provides enhanced funding to school age students of Aboriginal ancestry. Enhanced funding provides culturally appropriate educational programs and services to support the success of Aboriginal students. This funding policy is part of a larger policy framework to support the achievement of Aboriginal students. Other components of the policy framework include Aboriginal enhancement agreements, school growth plans, district accountability contracts and district reviews.

27. Require authorities, institutions and individuals throughout the system to: a) prepare annual plans for improvement and development based on measures of performance results and consideration of research concerning best practices, and b) direct funds and release time for staff to engage in professional development that addresses identified gaps in current performance or emerging needs.	27a) The annual MEd service plan and service plan reports, the B.C. College of Teachers annual report, district accountability contracts and school growth plans are legislatively required.[17] Consideration of best practices is strongly supported through the district review process and continuous professional development. All public post-secondary institutions are now required to submit annual service plans and reports to AVED. These service plans describe the activities institutions will be undertaking and targets they will achieve. The Industry Training Authority provides an annual service plan and report to the Minister of Advanced Education. 27b) MEd provides funding to many of the educational partners for professional development. One non-instructional day per school year for teacher "in service" training is legislatively designated. School districts also use other non-instructional days for professional development. The district review process examines how school districts provide funding and time for educators to address performance and/or emerging needs. Within government established financial and accountability frameworks, each public post-secondary institution is an autonomous organization and is responsible for the administration and management of its own resources and personnel.

[17] See Bill 34, the *School Amendment Act 2002*.